

## 12.225 VEHICULAR CRASH REPORTING

### **Reference:**

Traffic Crash Report Procedures - State of Ohio Department of Highway Safety  
 Ohio Revised Code 1533.121 - Deer Killed by Motor Vehicle  
 Ohio Revised Code 2935.28 - Property Owners to be Provided with Names of  
     Persons Charged with Damaging Their Property  
 Procedure 12.030 - Vehicles: Assignment, Use and Maintenance  
 Procedure 12.035 - Reporting Police Vehicular Accidents and Damage  
 Procedure 12.106 - University Air Care Helicopter  
 Procedure 12.210 - Traffic Control: Major Thoroughfares  
 Procedure 12.226 - Aircraft Crash Response and Reporting  
 Procedure 12.230 - Fatal Crash Investigation and Placement of Related Charges  
 Procedure 12.235 - Operating a Vehicle Under the Influence (OVI): Processing  
     and Arrest  
 Procedure 12.265 - Wrecker and Towing  
 Procedure 12.270 - Impounding, Moving, and Release of Vehicles  
 Procedure 12.435 - Reporting Conditions Affecting Other Departments - Form  
     318  
 Procedure 12.715 - Property and Evidence: Accountability, Processing, Storage,  
     and Release  
 Manual of Rules and Regulations – 2.03

### **Purpose:**

Assign responsibility for investigating and reporting vehicular crashes.

Ensure compliance with the State of Ohio Department of Highway Safety's Traffic Crash Report procedures.

### **Policy:**

Officers will conduct a thorough investigation and accurately document vehicular crashes while making every effort to ensure the safety of the community and return the roadway to a normal traffic pattern.

### **Information:**

A Form 683, Vehicle Crash Report Log, will be maintained at each district and will serve as the source for the crash report number entered on the Form OH-1, State of Ohio Traffic Crash Report. After all crash report numbers from a log sheet have been used, the sheet will be removed from the log and forwarded to the collator.

### **Procedure:**

#### A. Investigation Assignment

1. Traffic Unit is responsible for investigating and reporting the following vehicle crashes:
  - a. Fatal crashes.

- b. Potentially fatal crashes.
  - c. Spectacular or unusual crashes requiring detailed and extensive investigation.
  - d. Interstate highway crashes, if available.
  - e. Hit-skip follow-up investigations.
2. Districts are responsible for investigating and reporting the following vehicle crashes:
- a. Non-life threatening injury crashes.
    - 1) Non-life threatening injuries can include broken bones, cuts, and bruises when vital signs indicate the victim is in no apparent danger of death.
  - b. Non-injury, property damage crashes.
    - 1) This includes most hit-skip crashes and fender-bender type collisions.

#### B. Vehicular Crash Investigation

1. The responding officer will:
- a. Determine if there are injuries and if medical aid is necessary.
  - b. Request a supervisor respond if the injuries are serious.
  - c. Request Police Communications Section (PCS) dispatch the Fire Department, if needed.
  - d. Protect the crash scene.
  - e. Have the drivers remove all vehicles from the roadway, if possible, and then complete all necessary paperwork. Use push bumpers, when possible, to remove disabled vehicles from the roadway in order to relieve traffic congestion.
    - 1) Under no circumstances will officers attempt to move a motor vehicle when the following circumstances exist:
      - a) A vehicle carrying Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) has overturned or received significant structural damage.
      - b) The vehicle is involved in a fatality or potential fatality.

- 2) Before having drivers remove vehicles from the roadway, ensure:
  - a) Any injuries will not increase in severity because of the movement.
  - b) The driver of the vehicle may legally operate the vehicle, i.e., the driver is not intoxicated, etc. Retain all driver licenses until the investigation is completed.
  - c) The vehicle has no major defects that may cause the driver to lose control.
  - d) The driver has full instructions as to where they are to exit the roadway and where to meet the investigating officer. Ensure that the place where they are to meet the investigating officer is a safe location.
- f. Conduct a complete investigation.
  - 1) Investigating officers will process any Polaroid photos taken at the crash scene as evidence to be held for court.
    - a) Label each Polaroid and include the Form OH-1 report number.
- g. Determine the need for other departments or agencies in cases of gas leaks, down wires, damaged buildings, broken or down telephone poles, damaged fire hydrants, hazardous material spills, etc.
  - 1) Notify district desk personnel of damage. District desk personnel will call Public Works Customer Service to report the damage.
    - a) Public Works will determine the agency responsible for the damaged property and make the proper notification.
  - 2) Complete a Form 318, Conditions Affecting Other Departments Report, and include the Form OH-1 report number when conditions require action by other City departments or the Ohio Department of Transportation.
    - a) Officers will forward the Form 318 and two copies to the district/unit collator with the Form OH-1.
      - 1] The original Form 318 will be forwarded and faxed to the Public Works Customer Service Office by the district/unit collator.

- 2] Copies will be forwarded to the City Solicitor's Office and filed at the initiating unit by the district/unit collator.
  - 3] The collator will forward a copy of the Form 318 to the Ohio Department of Transportation if conditions require action by that agency.
- 3) When a fire hydrant is struck, request the Fire Department respond to assess damage and handle necessary repairs.
- h. Request wreckers when needed.
- i. Have the drivers involved in the crash complete a Form 528, Driver or Person Involved in Accident, to exchange necessary information: name, address, telephone number, insurance information, vehicle information, etc.
- 1) When a crash causes damage to property, upon request of the property owner, the investigating law enforcement agency will provide the name of the driver if the driver is charged with a violation of a City ordinance or State statute.
    - a) Law enforcement agencies and their employees acting in good faith are not civilly liable.
  - 2) Refer requests for information or copies of completed Forms OH-1 to Records Section.
- j. If the crash involves City equipment, request a supervisor from the affected City department respond to the scene.
- 1) The supervisor of the involved employee will complete the City accident form. Administrative action will be taken if the employee is found at fault.
2. The investigating officer will request a supervisor respond to the scene in the following cases:
- a. Crashes involving an on-duty or off-duty police officer.
  - b. Fatal, potentially fatal, or serious injury crashes.
  - c. Unusual crashes.
3. The responding supervisor will:
- a. Determine if a Traffic Unit investigator is needed.
  - b. Determine if the Night Chief or district officer in charge is needed.
  - c. Ensure a complete investigation is made.

4. Reports at district stations
    - a. District personnel will prepare a Form OH-1 and other necessary forms when a citizen responds to a district to report a crash.
  5. Reporting crashes on private property
    - a. PCS will not dispatch police personnel to crashes on private property unless it involves an injury, hit skip, or the vehicles are not operable.
      - 1) PCS will advise participants involved to respond to the nearest district to file a report.
      - 2) If dispatched to the scene of a crash on private property, the officer will make the report.
      - 3) Police personnel witnessing or coming upon the scene of a crash on private property will make the crash report.
  6. Reporting crashes involving Hamilton County vehicles inside the city limits
    - a. Department personnel will investigate and complete a report for all auto accidents involving County vehicles inside the city limits.
    - b. PCS will notify Hamilton County Communications Center of all auto accidents involving County vehicles with serious injuries or fatalities.
      - 1) Hamilton County Sheriff's Office Traffic Section personnel may respond and monitor the auto accident investigation.
- C. Form OH-1, State of Ohio Traffic Crash Report
1. The investigating officer must complete a Form OH-1 for all crashes whether the vehicle is occupied or not.
    - a. Complete a Form 533, Hit Skip Supplementary Report, in all unsolved hit-skip crashes and attach it to the Form OH-1.
      - 1) Information on unsolved hit skip vehicles is recorded on the Form 533, not on the Form OH-1.
      - 2) Upon completion of the report, the investigating officer will fax a copy of the Form OH-1, the Form 533 (both sides), and any other pertinent information to the Traffic Unit.
  2. Print all information with a black ink ballpoint pen only.

3. Obtain a crash report number from the Form 683, Vehicle Crash Report Log, located at each district.
  - a. The investigating officer will obtain this number from the district in which the crash occurred.
    - 1) This number may be obtained via telephone or MDT.
  - b. The investigating officer will record the Form OH-1 report number on the crash report.
  - c. The investigating officer will leave a copy of completed fatal, unusual, or serious injury crash reports at the district of occurrence. Traffic Unit will fax a copy of these types of crash reports to the affected district. Desk personnel will use these reports when releasing information to the news media.
    - 1) Crash reports will normally be available within seven to ten business days at Records Section.
  - d. Off-duty detail officers will process the crash report upon completion of the detail at the district in which the detail was worked.
  - e. Completed Crash Report Logs will be stored at the district of use and one copy of the completed log will be forwarded to Records Section.
    - 1) Records Section will verify the information on the log and return a signed copy to the affected district.
4. Before ending a tour of duty, the investigating officer must submit the completed Form OH-1 to a supervisor.
  - a. When an investigation extends beyond the investigator's tour of duty, the investigator will obtain authorization from a supervisor to continue working. At the discretion of a supervisor, completion of the investigation and report may be assigned to the following shift.
5. A supervisor will review the completed crash report for accuracy and forward it to a collator.
  - a. The collator will log the auto accidents on the Auto Accident Summary and forward the summary to the Crime Analysis Unit by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.
  - b. The collator will ensure the reports are hand carried to Traffic Unit by 0900 hours each weekday.
  - c. When a crash involves a University of Cincinnati (UC) or Xavier University (XU) student who is seriously injured, the report will be faxed to either UC at 556-4940 or XU at 745-3861.

6. If additional information is obtained after completing and forwarding the original report, use a Form OH-1 and check the "supplement" box. Use the original report number when providing additional information.
7. Records Section will separate the top copies of pages 1-3 of the Form OH-1 and any supplemental reports and forward them to the Ohio Department of Public Safety. The bottom copies of pages 1-3 and any supplemental reports will be forwarded to Traffic Engineering.
  - a. The information will be entered into the Optical Imaging System by Records Section prior to forwarding.

#### D. Deer Killed by Motor Vehicle

1. Ohio Revised Code 1533.121 allows the release of a deer carcass to the driver of the vehicle hitting and killing the deer. If the driver does not want the carcass, it may be released to a public or private institution or charity. The following rules govern release of the deer carcass:
  - a. The driver must be an Ohio resident. The private or public institution or charity must be an Ohio institution or charity.
    - 1) Hamilton County Communications Center has a list of institutions and charities willing to accept the deer carcass.
  - b. The crash that kills the deer is reported within 24 hours.
  - c. The driver, institution, or charity agrees not to sell or give away the deer. The driver and the driver's immediate family or the inhabitants of the institution or charity receiving it will eat the deer.
2. If an individual comes to a district to report and claim a deer killed by a motor vehicle, the investigating officer should inspect the carcass to be sure the injuries are consistent with a motor vehicle accident, e.g., no gun shot wounds.
  - a. If the injuries are questionable or inconsistent with a motor vehicle accident, do not release the carcass. Contact PCS to request a local Wildlife Officer respond to the scene.
  - b. Illegal deer killing is a violation of ORC 1531.02 and is a third degree misdemeanor.
3. Releasing a deer to the driver or charitable institution
  - a. Complete a Form 21, Ohio Division of Wildlife Deer Killed by Motor Vehicle. The officer will sign his name and badge number in the section for the Game Protector's signature.
    - 1) Each district maintains a supply of the Form 21. Additional copies of the Form 21 are available at the Supply Unit.

- b. Give the yellow copy of the Form 21 to the person or institution taking possession of the deer as a receipt for the carcass.
  - c. Attach the white copy of the Form 21 to the Form OH-1.
- 4. If neither the driver nor a charitable institution wants the deer, contact Public Works at 591-6010 to dispose of the carcass. Complete and forward the Form 21 to the Traffic Unit.
  - a. Traffic Unit will send a copy of the top portion of Form 21 to the Division of Wildlife (Xenia Office) biweekly and keep a copy for Department records.